

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 03229 071702Z

46

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 OMB-01 IO-14 NIC-01 EURE-00

SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 DRC-01 /112 W

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O R 071615Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3610

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3229

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJECT: ITALIAN GOVERNMENT CRISIS

DIA FOR A2 AND DI5

REF: ROME 3170

1. PRIME MINISTER DESIGNATE RUMOR HAS ALREADY COMMENCED INFORMAL

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PAGE 02 ROME 03229 071702Z

DISCUSSIONS WITH CENTER-LEFT POLITICAL LEADERS AND WILL EXPLAIN HIS

PROPOSED PROGRAM TO THE DC DIRECTORATE AND PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP IN COURSE OF DAY MARCH 7. RUMOR IS EXPECTED TO FOCUS ON GRAVE ECONOMIC SITUATION AND DC DESIRE FOR RAPID SOLUTION OF CRISIS BASED ON FOUR-PARTY CENTER-LEFT COOPERATION. FORMAL INTER-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS ARE NOW SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MARCH 8.

2. RUMOR'S PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS IN RECONSTITUTING FOUR-PARTY CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT HINGE, AT LEAST INITIALLY, UPON ATTITUDE OF REPUBLICANS. REPUBLICAN DIRECTORATE LATE MARCH 6 ISSUED SHORT STATEMENT APPOINTING DELEGATION OF VICE-SECRETARIES AND PARLIAMENTARY GROUP LEADERS TO NEGOTIATE WITH RUMOR ON BASIS OF DIRECTORATE'S MARCH 1 DOCUMENT (ROME 2953), WHICH POSED REQUIREMENT THAT ALL PARTY SECRETARIES PARTICIPATE IN ANY NEW FOUR-PARTY GOVERNMENT. DIRECTORATE ALSO REFERRED LA MALFA'S OFFER OF RESIGNATION AS PARTY SECRETARY TO PRI NATIONAL COUNCIL, WITH RECOMMENDATION THAT COUNCIL REJECT IT. (NATIONAL COUNCIL WILL PROBABLY NOT MEET UNTIL CRISIS IS PAST, THUS PERMITTING LA MALFA TO REMAIN PERSONALLY OUT OF CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT FORECLOSING HIS RESUMPTION OF SECRETARYSHIP LATER.)

3. REPUBLICAN SOURCES TELL US THAT LAST NIGHT'S DIRECTORATE DOCUMENT CONCEALED SHARP DIVISIONS. REPORTEDLY, SIGNIFICANT MINORITY WANTS PARTY TO RE-ENTER GOVERNMENT WITHOUT LA MALFA, OTHERS FAVOR EXTERNAL SUPPORT, AND STILL OTHERS ARE INCLINED TO COMPLETE DISENGAGEMENT FOR PRESENT FROM ONGOING CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT. LA MALFA HIMSELF, WHO HAS STAYED AWAY FROM PARTY CONCLAVES CITING HIS RESIGNATION FROM SECRETARYSHIP, IS SAID TO HAVE INITIALLY FAVORED FULL DISENGAGEMENT BUT NOW TO LEAN TOWARD EXTERNAL SUPPORT. THESE SOURCES SUGGEST THAT, ON BASIS OF PRESENT INDICATIONS, A PREPONDERANCE OF PRI DIRECTORATE WOULD BE DISPOSED TO OFFER OUTSIDE PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT TO THREE-PARTY CENTER-LEFT COALITION WHEN (AS SEEMS LIKELY) PRI DEMAND REGARDING PARTY SECRETARY PARTICIPATION HAS BEEN FORMALLY REJECTED. HOWEVER, THEY CONCEDE THAT PRI LEADERS WILL BE BUFFETED BY CONFLICTING PRESSURES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE PARTY AS NEGOTIATIONS PROGRESS. VOLPE

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